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The Maryland Fruit Grower

Published Monthly by the Maryland State Horticultural Society

Edited by the Secretary, A. F. Vierheller, Extension Horticulturist

Volume 10 **August-September, 1940** **No. 8-9**

THE FALL MARKET

The Bulletin of National Association of Food Chains, April, 1940, contained an interesting observation on the fall apple market. It follows:

Comparative monthly sales data reveal that in the fall when apples are most plentiful, at the peak of quality, and lowest in price, the volume moved through stores is no greater than during the months after the turn of the year; also, that in the early marketing months of heavy production years, like 1939, store sales are only slightly larger than during years of average or light production, such as 1938. But after the apples have moved away from the orchards, sales through stores become more stabilized; and in years of heavy production special sales campaigns (such as the one covered by this report) result in a very heavy movement.

For example, one company this season sold 2,700 bushels in October and 4,700 bushels in February. Another sold 16,400 bushels in October and 21,000 in February. Still another sold 4,200 bushels in October and 6,500 in February.

A tabulation of monthly volume reports from companies of various sizes operating in all sections of the country shows for the six months—September through February (this season)—sales were divided as follows:

14% in September	18% in December
19% in October	14% in January
16% in November	19% in February

It is interesting to note, however, that one company, doing business several hundred miles from any important apple producing section, more than trebled its sales during the early weeks of the season by special sales efforts. Its sales for the three months of September, October, and November were 54 per cent greater than the previous year, and were exactly 20 per cent more than sales for December, January, and February. They had competition from low grades trucked in and sold by peddlers, roadside stands, and by other usual means during the apple harvest months. But that competition was not as intense as in the heart of an apple producing section in a year of heavy production. The company handled a better grade of fruit than much that was offered the public and proved that consumers want the better quality if it is obtainable at fair prices.

In this regard, however, another company, operating in an important apple producing state, writes: "Our warehouses handle only No. 1 grades, but growers *insist* upon selling *stores* lower grades."

Here, it seems, are some interesting questions presented to apple growers about the effect of flooding the early season markets with low grade apples; both as to effect on price received by producers, and the potentially greater volume of good fruit that might then be consumed, leaving less to go into storage to be burdened with increased marketing expense.

The officer of one apple producer organization recently wrote:—"It has struck me that the women shopping for fruit are much less impressed

by the quantity of apples offered at a certain price than by their quality and attractiveness. It has seemed stupid to me to store the best quality of apples at the time of year when the public is most apple hungry, in order to make way for sale of culls, and then force stored apples on an unwilling market in the spring."

His solution was a long-range educational project and diversion program, which, he believed "are of such importance that they must have every chance to be tried." He added, however,

"I don't believe they stand a chance of success until a clear-cut and complete responsibility for success is accepted by the growers . . . and I have a very high respect for what the apple growers are able to do once they actually set out to do it."

APPLES AS CATTLE FEED

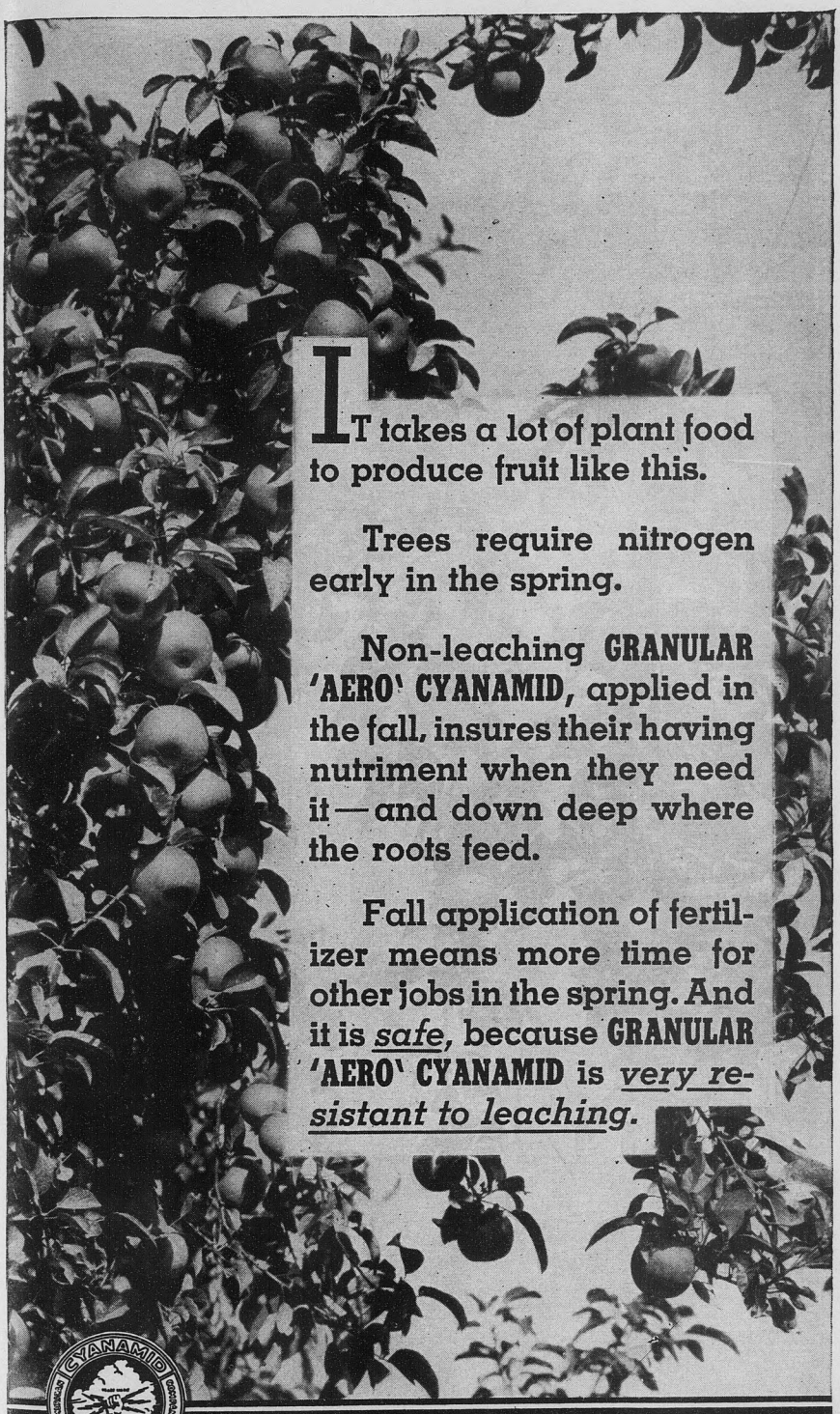
National Apple Institute, Columbus, Ohio wants to publish some press material and pamphlets on feeding of apples to livestock. Any grower who has any good experience will help a lot by writing the Institute about it. We can move a lot of apples through such channels, and a lot of publicity will be given any such material that growers may furnish. Do it now.

A NEW FIELD MAN

Mr. John N. Hamlet of the Fish and Wild Life Service, formerly U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey has been assigned to conduct the work of farm and field rodent control in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Ohio. He will be located at the University of Maryland with office in the Entomology Department. Farmers and fruit growers should derive great benefit from Mr. Hamlet's activities, as he will be assigned to extension work.

BROWN ROT IN PEACH ORCHARDS

One peach grower brought up a practical question regarding future control of brown rot in peach orchards. There has been heavy drop of some varieties during the rainy spell, and there was also considerable drop of mature peaches at picking time. Of course, *it would be ideal to get all of these rotted fruits out of the orchard,* but maybe not practical, as weeds and trash under the trees would practically prevent raking up the rots. When the trees are gassed, it would be well to pull the rotted fruits a few feet away from the tree base, then disk them into the soil when preparing for the cover crop seeding. Cultivations of future seasons, especially in spring before bloom, should help to minimize the dangers of infection by covering the mummies or loosening them from the soil where they may try to settle down and produce spores. In general, it will take 2 years for the present rotted fruits to cause infection, although a lot of these fruits will produce spores next year. Better plan to use a pink or "blossom-blight" spray in the spring for the next two years, if the peach orchard has a heavy drop of rotted peaches in it now. The Plant Pathologists at the University of Maryland feel that this is a sound policy. There are chances, of course, that some of the spring seasons will not be favorable to brown rot development. Briefly, *if it is possible,* pick up the drops and bury them.



IT takes a lot of plant food to produce fruit like this.

Trees require nitrogen early in the spring.

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Fall application of fertilizer means more time for other jobs in the spring. And it is *safe*, because **GRANULAR 'AERO' CYANAMID** is *very resistant to leaching.*

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FRUIT PACKAGES

Enclosed with this issue is some material concerning packages. The box material is a result of the conference at Harrisburg in early June. We are indebted to the fine cooperation of Mr. James Magner and The National Wooden Box Association with whom he is associated, in having this material worked up for growers' use. The Veneer Package Council is working on some improved baskets that will probably give us a better basket which will not tolerate over-packing with resulting bruising that we now seem to have from such practice. In brief, the package men are anxious to develop the best possible package, whether box or basket, and need growers' suggestions. It's good business.

CHECKING UP

The season is again upon us when we harvest the crop, and when we may notice some things that might have been overlooked or done a little better. Everybody makes mistakes but not everybody can profit by them. This season, for example, some peach growers did not thin heavily enough. Some growers had to go over parts of the orchard and thin the second time. Possibly the increased size paid for the labor. Certainly the peach market had little pity for small peaches. Some growers had a lot of peach trees broken up by heavy loads. Pruning might have had something to do with it, or not enough thinning was done, and perhaps a few props might have prevented the trouble. Not many growers prop peach trees, but some growers with smaller acreages have been propping with good results. In general, growers have realized the bad effects of bruising of fruit. But maybe we still need to equip the graders with lots more pads, canvas filler aprons and canvas flaps to slow down the fruit as it goes into the filler bins. Better look over the grading machines and see if all spots that might cause bruising have been taken care of. There are plenty of places in the operations, equipment and personnel of the orchard that should be checked over in order that the packing operations may be done more efficiently.

APPLE TREE REMOVAL PROGRAM

The plan for removal of marginal apple trees has been added to the Federal Soil Conservation Program for 1941. Practically entire credit for this accomplishment is due the National Planning Committee composed of growers from many states. Mr. J. A. Cohill represented Maryland on this Committee. The Maryland State Soil Conservation Committee cooperated admirably.

The plan provides for "the removal of diseased or uneconomic apple trees the major portion of whose fruit is of inferior quality." This includes trees in commercial or farm orchards which have poor fruit due to age, soil, lack of care, poor variety, etc.

The plan provides that "payment will be made only for the removal of live, permanent trees and not for the removal of filler or semi-permanent trees." The grower may remove as many trees as he desires, but will receive a maximum payment of $15.00 per acre. Trees under 5 inches in diameter one foot from the ground, are not included in the payment. Trees 5 to 12 inches in diameter 1 foot from the ground will be paid for at the rate of 30c per tree, and trees larger than this diameter will be paid for at the rate of

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NATURAL CHILEAN NITRATE OF SODA

50c per tree. The total that a grower can earn on his orchard by this practice is governed by the units of credit that his acreage will allow.

Method of removing trees is not defined. Evidently they may be sawed, chopped or pulled. Probably it will be insisted that the trees be cut rather close to the ground to prevent future cropping due to new growth on the stump. Less erosion would result if the trees were cut off at the stump. The law does provide that "land so cleared shall not be used for the growing of soil-depleting crops during the year for which the payment is made."

Here is a program that will assist in tree removal. It is hoped that growers will use the plan and will interest owners of small, abandoned or poorly-handled marginal blocks to remove them with the financial help that is offered. This is a step toward reducing the crop of culls and great good can come from it. The plan will be explained to growers when the 1941 soil conservation program is arranged with the county soil conservation committees.

MOUSE CONTROL BAIT STATIONS

JOHN N. HAMLET
*Specialist in Rodent Control**

For the control of pine mice in orchards the first and most important step is the placing of concentration stations. The purpose of these concentration stations is to attract mice to a central point where use of bait is easier and more effective. Without these stations control practices are laborious and inefficient. In using the best technique known today for the control of this pest, these concentration stations are an absolute necessity. Not only are they necessary for good control, but are labor-saving to the orchardist.

The best type of concentration station is two-ply roofing paper cut 18" x 18". Once placed in the orchard and handled with any degree of care these stations should last at least four or five years and probably longer. The cost is two cents per square. A roll of 2-ply, 36" roofing paper can be cut in half at the nearest lumber mill or cut by hand as desired. This makes two rolls 18" wide. Then simply cut the roll paper into 18" lengths. There should be one such station at each tree, but if the orchardist does not care to cover his whole orchard the first year, he should pick those blocks of trees that have the highest population of mice.

There are two methods of putting out concentration stations. One method is to place the stations under the trees at random with no thought of looking for underground runways of the pine mouse. When using this method the tar paper square should be placed at least 3 ft. away from the trunk under the overhanging branches, depending upon the tree spread. Always be sure to place a piece of sod, or better yet, a rock on the station to hold it down. The orchardist must remember that when the above method is used it will usually be two or three months before these stations will be found and used by the mice.

The other, and more practical method, is to place the stations over

* The Fish and Wild Life Service, Department of the Interior, has stationed Mr. Hamlet with the Department of Entomology, University of Maryland Extension Service under a cooperative agreement for extension work in the rodent control in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Ohio. T. B. Symons, Director.

disturbed runway systems. The runways may be found by noting the exterior holes used by the mice or little humps of earth where the mice have unloaded the dirt in their excavation work. Merely use a stick or the foot to gouge out or kick away the dirt over the runway and place the station over this disturbed portion of the runway system. Here, as in the first method, it is best to place a piece of sod or a rock on the station. When this latter method of placing the stations is used, the mice, if present, will show activity under the square in a very short time, usually in an hour or two and in never more than two days. With the well defined runways showing under the station it is relatively simple to place the bait in the runway and cover it again with the square.

As to the actual labor involved, several orchardists in this section have timed their men in the actual orchard practice so that it is now possible to give the following figures on labor cost. It was found that in using the old method of placing bait in open holes and runways it took five man-days per twenty-five acres. For placing stations over gouged out runways it took one and two-thirds man-days per twenty-five acres and for placing bait under the concentration stations it took one man-day per twenty-five acres. In other words, the initial labor of placing stations and bait is two and two-thirds man days per twenty-five acres, and after this is done it takes only one man day per twenty-five acres for the next three or four days. Compared with the old method of placing bait in open holes and runways, then covering it, the new method offers a very definite amount of labor saved coupled with a big improvement in actual control results.

As for the time to put these concentration stations out, it can be said that this work is an excellent rainy day occupation during the summer months and early fall.

IMPROVED "CYCLONE" FRUIT PICKERS

Bags and Buckets

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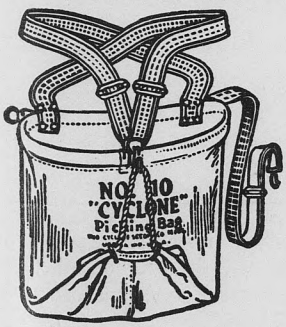

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Fall spraying of peaches with Scalecide has a tendency to increase normal production, a heavier set of fruit, and more resistance to cold weather. It is not unusual to find Scalecide sprayed orchards with a partial crop after a bad winter, when neighboring orchards are frozen out.

Fall spraying with Scalecide is the best time for leaf curl control. In the Spring the leaf curl spores often have already grown into the buds before spraying can be done. The very best leaf curl control is obtained by adding ½ gallon of Sulfocide to each 100 gallons of the Scalecide spray. The oil carries the sulfur under the bud-scales and into places not reached with lime sulfur or any other combination.

Fall spraying with Scalecide controls scale just as well as in the Spring. Furthermore Scalecide is the only oil spray having distinct fungicidal properties. Coupled with the penetrating action of the miscible oil, it is the one material to clean up brown rot cankers on the twigs and limbs.

PROOF A few years ago, several large peach growers bought a car of Scalecide and used it in various orchards in their neighborhood. In every case, the Scalecide sprayed trees were healthier, more vigorous, and held their foliage better throughout the summer, than adjoining oil emulsion sprayed trees.

The use of Scalecide was continued, with many other orchards joining in, with the result that Scalecide is the standard dormant spray in that section.

There has been a sharp increase in the production of peaches in that area. This season, when so many peach orchards were frozen out, these Scalecide users had a nice crop.

There are peach growers who think that Scalecide is too expensive for them to use. These growers don't. DO YOU?

Spray your peaches with Scalecide this Fall, as soon as the foliage is off. It may be worth a great deal to you. Scalecide is guaranteed to make a better orchard than lime sulfur or oil emulsion. Write for guarantee, literature and prices.

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